

Agency: 477 Department of Fish and Wildlife
Decision Package Code/Title: XK Reduction of PS Shellfish Harvest
Budget Period: 2011-13
Budget Level: PL - Performance Level

Recommendation Summary Text:

This initial 5% reduction option reduces the amount of clam and oyster seed planted on public beaches by 30%, which will reduce the recreational harvest of clams and oysters from public beaches in Puget Sound by approximately 20% or more in 2-3 years. It also reduces shellfish disease and predator control permitting functions by 50-65% and reduces intertidal clam and oyster assessment and management activities.

Reducing the regulatory permitting of shellfish transfers from restricted areas to mandatory functions will increase the conservation risk of shellfish diseases, predators, and pests being spread to other beaches. This will place the economic stability and profitability of Washington's commercial industry at greater risk and threaten native shellfish.

Fiscal Detail

Operating Expenditures	<u>FY 2012</u>	<u>FY 2013</u>	<u>Total</u>
001-1 General Fund - Basic Account-State	(128,338)	(128,339)	(256,677)
Total Cost	(128,338)	(128,339)	(256,677)
Staffing	<u>FY 2012</u>	<u>FY 2013</u>	<u>Annual Average</u>
FTEs	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0

Package Description:

There are beaches that have a known presence of shellfish diseases, predators, or pests. To protect native shellfish and commercial shellfish growing areas, WDFW requires a permit for the transfer of shellfish from these restricted areas, preventing the spread of diseases, predators and pests to areas that are not currently impacted by them.

To enhance recreational harvest opportunity, WDFW stocks clam and oyster seed on popular public beaches. WDFW also conducts population assessments on public beaches to set seasons and provide sustainable recreational harvest opportunities based on scientific principles. Without this technical information, shellfish harvest opportunities will be reduced.

Economic pressures in Washington continue, reducing the revenue the state receives to fund state services. Projected General Fund -State (GF-S) revenues upon which the 2011-13 state budget was developed are not likely to meet expectations. In response, the Governor has requested a 5-10 percent reduction in the 2011-13 GF-S budget.

This reduction option will consolidate two Fish and Wildlife Bio 3 positions into one. The shellfish permitting function of one position would be reduced by 35% and the clam and oyster assessment and management functions of the other would be reduced by 65%.

The quantity of clam and oyster seed stocked each year would be reduced by 30%. The seed is currently purchased from commercial shellfish growers in Washington through a competitive bid process.

A reduction of shellfish disease, predator, and pest permitting to mandatory permitting only will increase the conservation risk to native shellfish and the commercial shellfish grower industry.

Clam and oyster assessments and management on public beaches will be reduced causing a loss of recreational harvest opportunity. The reduction would require some beaches to be put into a more passive management status due to the lack of technical information, resulting in a corresponding reduction of harvest shares and harvest opportunity.

The recreational harvest of clams and oysters in Puget Sound will be reduced by approximately 20% or more in 2-3 years due to the reduced stocking levels under this option.

Name and Phone Number of Subject Matter Expert:
Craig Burley, Fish Management Division Manager (360) 902-2784

Narrative Justification and Impact Statement

What specific performance outcomes does the agency expect?

The recreational harvest of clams and oysters in Puget Sound will be reduced.

The permitting of shellfish transfers would be reduced to statewide mandatory functions.

Technical information from the assessment and management of clams and oysters in Puget Sound will be reduced.

All legislative districts connected to Puget Sound and the Washington Coast will be impacted.

Performance Measure Detail

Activity: A043 Fisheries Management

Incremental Changes

No measures submitted for package

Is this decision package essential to implement a strategy identified in the agency's strategic plan?

This reduction option impacts the WDFW 2011-17 Strategic Plan, Goal 1: A) enhance conservation practices to improve protection and restoration of fish and wildlife, and B) increase protection and restoration of ecosystem functions. And, Goal 2: A) increase the economic benefits and public participation derived from sustainable fish and wildlife opportunities.

Does this decision package provide essential support to one of the Governor's priorities?

This reduction option lessens the Department's contribution towards improving the quality of Washington's natural resources by maintaining healthy fish and wildlife populations.

Does this decision package make key contributions to statewide results? Would it rate as a high priority in the Priorities of Government process?

This reduction option decreases the Department's contribution towards the following natural resource POG goals:

Preserve, maintain and restore natural systems and landscapes; and

Establish safeguards and standards to protect natural resources.

What are the other important connections or impacts related to this proposal?

Clam and oyster seed are purchased from commercial shellfish growers through a competitive bid process. A Washington company has been awarded this bid for many years.

Permitting the transfer of shellfish from restricted areas serves to protect Washington's large commercial shellfish industry and the commercial growers are supportive of this program.

Communities that are near shellfish bearing beaches will be economically impacted via a loss of recreational shellfish harvesting opportunities.

What alternatives were explored by the agency, and why was this alternative chosen?

The Department first identified opportunities for savings or fund shifts and partnerships and looked for reductions that would have the least impact toward accomplishing our core functions. While the Department can no longer preserve its primary functions without relief from the current economic climate and funding limitations, the recommendations seek to minimize impacts to its core, while at the same time emphasizing our conservation mission.

What are the consequences of not funding this package?

Reducing the permitting of shellfish transfers from restricted areas to mandatory functions will increase the conservation risk of shellfish diseases, predators, and pests being spread to other beaches. This will put the economic stability and profitability of Washington's commercial industry at greater risk and threaten native shellfish.

The recreational harvest of clams and oysters from public beaches in Puget Sound will be reduced by approximately 20% or more in 2-3 years.

What is the relationship, if any, to the state's capital budget?

None

What changes would be required to existing statutes, rules, or contracts, in order to implement the change?

None

Expenditure and revenue calculations and assumptions

Fish and Wildlife Biologist 3:

Salary = \$4,627/mo. x 12 months = -\$55,524/year

Benefits = \$1,702/mo. x 12 months = -\$20,424/year

Total Annual Cost - -\$75,948/year

Object E Expenditures:

Annual clam and oyster seed purchase from contract = -\$32,100/year

\$40,677 included in object E of this package represents the infrastructure and support costs associated with this program reduction. Recent administrative cuts have been deeper than program cuts, and administrative services reflect skeletal staffing levels. Future administrative cuts will therefore be proportionate to program reductions, and administrative functions will generally comply with state and federal laws.

Which costs and functions are one-time? Which are ongoing? What are the budget impacts in future biennia?

Given the economic losses associated with this package, the agency prefers this reduction to be one-time and not impact future biennia.

<u>Object Detail</u>	<u>FY 2012</u>	<u>FY 2013</u>	<u>Total</u>
A Salaries And Wages	(55,500)	(55,500)	(111,000)
B Employee Benefits	(20,400)	(20,400)	(40,800)
E Goods And Services	(52,438)	(52,439)	(104,877)
Total Objects	(128,338)	(128,339)	(256,677)